

Application No. 10/647,980
Amendment dated September 11, 2008

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IN THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings in this application.

1. (Currently amended). A method of distributing hair care or cosmetic products on demand at the point of use, comprising the steps of:
 - locating a vending device in a salon;
 - authenticating a professional hair or beauty care provider to determine if said professional hair or beauty care provider is authorized to access said vending device;
 - purchasing one or more hair care or cosmetic products from said vending device by said professional hair or beauty care provider to provide transaction data;
 - transmitting said transaction data to a central computer over a communications network; and
 - remotely managing inventory of said vending device in the salon by updating inventory data for said vending device based on said transaction data [L:] and scheduling delivery based on said updated inventory data.
2. (Canceled).
3. (Original). The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of dispensing said one or more hair care or cosmetic products.
4. (Previously presented). The method of claim 1, wherein the step of purchasing comprises the step of receiving payment information from said professional hair or beauty care provider and verifying said payment information is sufficient to cover the cost of said one or more hair care or cosmetic products.
5. (Original). The method of claim 4, further comprising the step of dispensing said one or more hair care or cosmetic products if it is determined that said

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payment information is sufficient to cover the cost of said one or more hair care or cosmetic products.

6. (Original). The method of claim 5, further comprising the steps of displaying an insufficient fund message and inhibiting said one or more hair care or cosmetic products from being dispensed if it is determined that said payment information is insufficient to cover the cost of said one or more hair care or cosmetic products.
7. (Original). The method of claim 5, further comprising the step of printing a receipt for said one or more hair care or cosmetic products purchased by said profession hair or beauty care provider.
8. (Currently amended). A method of managing client relationships and distributing hair care and cosmetic products on demand at the point-of-use, comprising the steps of:
 - locating a vending device in a salon;
 - accessing said vending device by an operator to purchase one or more hair care or cosmetic products;
 - authenticating said operator to determine if said operator is authorized to access said vending device;
 - receiving payment information from said operator;
 - verifying said payment information is sufficient to cover the cost of said one or more hair care or cosmetic products; and
 - dispensing said one or more hair care or cosmetic products to said operator if it is determined that said operator is authorized to access said vending device;
 - and
 - remotely managing inventory of said vending device in the salon by
updating inventory data for said vending device based on said purchase [();] and scheduling delivery based on said updated inventory data.
9. (Cancelled).

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10. (Currently amended). The method of claim [[9]] 8, further comprising the steps of displaying an insufficient fund message and inhibiting said one or more hair care or cosmetic products from being dispensed if it is determined that said payment information is insufficient to cover the cost of said one or more hair care or cosmetic products.
11. (Original). The method of claim 8, further comprising the step of printing a receipt for said one or more hair care or cosmetic products purchased by said operator if it is determined that said operator is authorized to access said vending device.
12. (Currently amended). A method of distributing a customized hair care or cosmetic product having a plurality of shades at a point-of-use to a professional user, comprising the steps of:
 - selecting a shade from said plurality of shades associated with said hair care or cosmetic product by said professional user on a vending device;
 - determining by said vending device an amount of each base stock color required to prepare said shade selected by said professional user;
 - receiving payment information from said professional user; and
 - verifying said payment information is sufficient to cover the cost of said hair care or cosmetic product; and
 - delivering said tray containing said prepared hair care or cosmetic product at the point-of-use to said professional user; and
 - remotely managing inventory of said vending device by updating inventory data for said vending device [[;]] and scheduling delivery based on said updated inventory data.
13. (Original). The method of claim 12, further comprising the steps of mixing said prepared hair care or cosmetic product prior to delivering said tray containing said prepared hair care or cosmetic product to said professional user.

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14. (Cancelled).
15. (Currently amended). The method of claim [[14]] 12, further comprising the steps of displaying an insufficient fund message if it is determined that said payment information is insufficient to cover the cost of said hair care or cosmetic product.
16. (Original). The method of claim 12, wherein the step of selecting comprises the step of receiving a product sku number from said professional user.
17. (Original). The method of claim 12, wherein the step of selecting comprises the step of displaying a set of said plurality of shades at a time on a display device to said professional user.
18. (Original). The method of 12, further comprising the step of printing a receipt for said prepared hair care or cosmetic product.
19. (Currently amended). A vending apparatus for distributing a customized hair care or cosmetic product having a plurality of shades at a point-of-use to a professional user, comprising:
 - a user interface for selecting a shade from said plurality of shades associated with said hair care or cosmetic product by said professional user;
 - a processor for determining an amount of each base stock color required to prepare said shade selected by said professional user;
 - a device for receiving payment information from said professional user; and wherein said processor is operable to verify said payment information is sufficient to cover the cost of said hair care or cosmetic product;
 - a plurality of reservoirs, each containing different base stock color of said hair care or cosmetic product, for dispensing determined amount of the respective base stock color into a tray to provide said shade of said hair care or cosmetic product; and

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a dispensing device for delivering said tray containing said prepared hair care or cosmetic product at the point-of-use to said professional user; and
a communications network for transmitting transaction data to a central computer, which remotely manages inventory of said vending apparatus by updating inventory data for said vending apparatus based on said transaction data and scheduling delivery based on said updated inventory data.

20. (Original). The vending apparatus of claim 19, further comprising a mixing device for mixing said prepared hair care or cosmetic product.
21. (Cancelled).
22. (Currently amended). The vending apparatus of claim [[21]] 12, further comprising a display device for displaying an insufficient fund message if it is determined that said payment information is insufficient to cover the cost of said hair care or cosmetic product.
23. (Original). The vending apparatus of claim 19, wherein said user interface is a keypad and said keypad is operable to receive a product sku number from said professional user.
24. (Original). The vending apparatus of claim 19, wherein said display device is operable to a set of said plurality of shades at a time on said display device to said professional user; and wherein said keypad is operable by said professional user to select said shade from said set of said plurality shades displayed on said display device.
25. (Original). The vending apparatus of claim 19, wherein said hair care or cosmetic product is a hair dye product.
26. (Original). The vending apparatus of claim 19, further comprising a printer for printing a receipt for said prepared hair care or cosmetic product.
27. (Currently amended). A method of distributing hair color products on demand at the point-of-use, comprising the steps of:

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locating a vending device in a salon;
purchasing one or more hair color products from said vending device by a
cosmetologists or other licensed hair care provider to provide transaction data;
authenticating said cosmetologists or other licensed hair care provider to
determine if said cosmetologists or other licensed hair care provider is authorized to
access said vending device;
transmitting said transaction data to a central computer over a
communications network; and
remotely managing inventory of said vending device in the salon by
updating inventory data for said vending device based on said transaction data [[:]]
and scheduling delivery based on said updated inventory data.

28. (Cancelled).
29. (Original). The method of claim 27, further comprising the step of dispensing
said one or more hair color products.
30. (Currently amended). The method of claim [[28]] 27, wherein the step of
purchasing comprises the step of receiving payment information from said
cosmetologists or other licensed hair care provider and verifying said payment
information is sufficient to cover the cost of said one or more hair color products.
31. (Original). The method of claim 30, further comprising the step of dispensing
said one or more hair color products if it is determined that said payment
information is sufficient to cover the cost of said one or more hair color products.
32. (Original). The method of claim 31, further comprising the steps of displaying
an insufficient fund message and inhibiting said one or more hair color products
from being dispensed if it is determined that said payment information is
insufficient to cover the cost of said one or more hair color products.

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33. (Original). The method of claim 31, further comprising the step of printing a receipt for said one or more hair color products purchased by said cosmologists or other licensed hair care provider.
34. (Currently amended). A method of managing client relationships and distributing hair color products on demand at the point-of-use, comprising the steps of:
 - locating a vending device in a salon;
 - accessing said vending device by an operator to purchase one or more hair color products;
 - authenticating said operator to determine if said operator is authorized to access said vending device;
 - receiving payment information from said operator; and
 - verifying said payment information is sufficient to cover the cost of said one or more hair color products;
 - dispensing said one or more hair color products to said operator if it is determined that said operator is authorized to access said vending device;
 - transmitting transaction data to a central computer over a communications network; and
 - remotely managing inventory of said vending device in the salon by updating inventory data for said vending device based on said transaction data [();] and scheduling delivery based on said updated inventory data.
35. (Canceled).
36. (Currently amended). The method of claim [35] 34, further comprising the steps of displaying an insufficient fund message and inhibiting said one or more hair color products from being dispensed if it is determined that said payment information is insufficient to cover the cost of said one or more hair color products.

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37. (Original). The method of claim 34, further comprising the step of printing a receipt for said one or more hair color products purchased by said operator if it is determined that said operator is authorized to access said vending device.
38. (Currently amended). A method of distributing a customized hair color product, having a plurality of shades at a point-of-use to a professional user, comprising the steps of:
 - selecting a hair color shade from said plurality of shades associated with said hair color product by said professional user on a vending device;
 - determining an amount of each base stock color required to prepare said shade selected by said professional user;
 - receiving payment information from said professional user; and
 - verifying said payment information is sufficient to cover the cost of said hair color product;
 - delivering said tray containing said prepared hair care or cosmetic product at the point-of-use to said professional user;
 - transmitting transaction data to a central computer over a communications network; and
 - remotely managing inventory of said vending device by updating inventory data for said vending device based on said transaction data [.] and scheduling delivery based on said updated inventory data.
39. (Original). The method of claim 29, further comprising the steps of mixing said prepared hair color product prior to delivering said tray containing said prepared hair color product to said professional user.
40. (Canceled).
41. (Original). The method of claim 31, further comprising the steps of displaying an insufficient fund message if it is determined that said payment information is insufficient to cover the cost of said hair color product.

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42. (Original). The method of claim 29, wherein the step of selecting comprises the step of receiving a product sku number from said professional user.
43. (Original). The method of claim 29, wherein the step of selecting comprises the step of displaying a set of said plurality of shades at a time on a display device to said professional user.
44. (Original). The method of 29, further comprising the step of printing a receipt for said prepared hair color product.
45. (Currently amended). A vending apparatus for distributing a customized hair color product having a plurality of shades at a point-of-use to a professional user, comprising:

a user interface for selecting a shade from said plurality of shades associated with said hair color product by said professional user and for accepting payment for a selected amount of said shade;

a processor for determining an amount of each base stock color required to prepare said shade selected by said professional user;

a plurality of reservoirs, each containing different base stock color of said hair color products, for dispensing determined amount of the respective base stock color into a tray to provide said shade of said hair color product; and

a device for receiving payment information from said professional user; and wherein said processor is operable to verify said payment information is sufficient to cover the cost of said hair color product;

a dispensing device for delivering said tray containing said prepared hair color product at the point-of-use to said professional user; and

a communications network for transmitting transaction data to a central computer, which remotely manages inventory of said vending apparatus by updating inventory data for said vending apparatus and scheduling delivery based on said updated inventory data.

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46. (Original). The vending apparatus of claim 45, further comprising a mixing device for mixing said prepared hair color product.
47. (Canceled).
48. (Currently amended). The vending apparatus of claim ~~47~~ 45, further comprising a display device for displaying an insufficient fund message if it is determined that said payment information is insufficient to cover the cost of said hair color product.
49. (Original). The vending apparatus of claim 45, wherein said user interface is a keypad and said keypad is operable to receive a product sku number from said professional user.
50. (Original). The vending apparatus of claim 45, wherein said display device is operable to a set of said plurality of shades at a time on said display device to said professional user; and wherein said keypad is operable by said professional user to select said shade from said set of said plurality shades displayed on said display device.
51. (Original). The vending apparatus of claim 45, further comprising a printer for printing a receipt for said prepared hair color product.